

Proposal for 9th EuroSEAS Conference, 16-18 August 2017, University of Oxford

Please send your proposals to: euroseas@kitlv.nl by 31 October 2016

(1) Title: Mythbusting Vietnam

(2) Convener: Dr Catherine Earl, Federation Business School, Federation University Australia, Catherine.Earl@federation.edu.au

(3) Brief description of panel (max ½ page):

This panel aims to identify and address myths that circulate widely in the field of Vietnam studies. These include: myths in understanding the process of *doi moi*, Vietnam's macro-economic reforms in 1986, as change from a closed society with Soviet-derived institutions of central planning to what is, apparently, a form of capitalism; myths of modernization and industrialization in the Party/State's current development program that sees infrastructure promoted over social welfare; myths that Confucian influences on Vietnamese gender codes contributed significantly to gender inequality in Vietnam and became a key framework for women's behavioural norms; myths that during *doi moi* women's attitudes and behaviours are undergoing dramatic changes while, at the same time, most heterosexual men are likely to try to defend structures of gender inequality in the face of changing gender relations; myths supporting the simplistic vision of public spaces in Vietnam's cities as limited to few iconic and colonial produced places without consideration for how people use social small-scale and privately-owned social spaces to foster a vibrant urban collective life; and myths that rural people in the city are uncultured and uncivilised, that the village is traditional, and that being rich in the countryside is not as good as being penniless in the city. As such myths illustrate, the current state of knowledge about Vietnam is wide open to challenges. This interdisciplinary panel invites contributions from economics, history, development studies, gender studies, geography, sociology, and anthropology that are firmly grounded in recent and indepth empirical field research and policy analysis, and that seek to revise the circulated facts, to establish a sound evidence base, and to evaluate the interests and tactics that shape knowledge production about Vietnam.

(4) Double session (2 x 90 min.):

1. Professor Adam Fforde, Victoria Institute of Strategic Economic Studies, Victoria University, Australia
2. Professor Vladimir Mazyrin, Institute for Asian and African Studies, Moscow State University, Russia
3. Associate Professor Nguyen Thi Hong-Xoan, Faculty of Sociology, Vietnam National University, Vietnam
4. Dr Minna Hakkarainen, Development Studies, University of Helsinki, Finland
5. Dr Philip Martin, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, London
6. Dr Marie Gibert, Department of East Asian Studies, University Paris Diderot, France

(5) Discussant: TBA